The Diary of Ochibi-san #1

Moyoco Anno

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#1

Moyoco Anno

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卯月【UZUKI】

(n) fourth month of the lunar calendar: April

Despite his humble appearance, our hero Ochibi hails from noble stock.
1
His trusted sidekick Nazeni, disguised as a dog, is really a sweet-jelly treat.
Made with bean jam.
2
Ochibi's arsenal of tricks includes ... a flying cushion!
3
A champion of justice, entrusted with saving the beautiful country of Japan ...
The adventures of Ochibi-san have just begun!!
4
4月1日
Really?
Nah, just kidding.
5

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

In Japanese, the word "chibi," which plays a prominent role in the name of our hero, is often used to refer to people small in stature, comparable to such English expressions as "little one" or "half pint." Likewise, the name of Ochibi's furry, not to mention inquisitive, companion Nazeni, means something along the lines of "But why?"

!
Ochibi is a runt!
オチビハチビ!
Such slander!
1
This means there must be more somewhere else.
Hee hee hee!
オチビハチビ!
2
It probably says something even worse!
I've gotta find it.
3
Ochibi-san, what're you looking for?
More insults!
4
Whatever for?
None here!!
If it were me, I'd look for butterflies.
5

RRRR
1
RRRR
2
RRRR
タタタ
3
RRRR
4
If you're going to call someone, then don't hang up till they answer!
So it'll just keep ringing when nobody's home.
5
6

He'll figure it out.
You don't think ...
1
I wonder.
2
See? He didn't figure it out.
3
Sometimes you just have to come out and say it.
Excuse me, Mr. Spider. You're spinning your web on our heads.
4

1
Ochibi-san, you still haven't left yet?
Any minute now ...
2
As soon as you go out with your umbrella, the rain stops, right?
Yes, That happens a lot lately.
3
Well, I'm waiting. But it looks like I'm going out with my umbrella.
Oh, so you're trying to outsmart the rain.
4
トントン
トン
5
This rain's pretty smart.
トントン
It makes a nice sound, though.
6

皐月【SATSUKI】

(n) fifth month of the lunar calendar: May

What better way to celebrate Boys' Festival than making rice cake treats!
Gotta hurry! Gotta hurry!
1
First the flour, then hot water ...
2
knead it ...
... steam it ...
3
add sugar and starch ...
4
steam it again ...
... and it's ready!
5
And they celebrated by fulfilling their dream of becoming the sweet bean-paste filling.
6

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

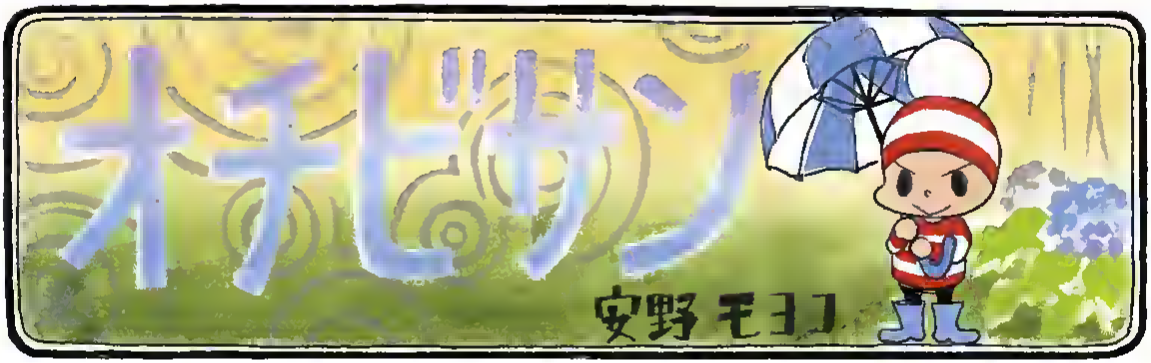
In Japan, May 5 — the fifth day of the fifth month of the year — marks Boys' Festival, also known as Children's Day. Families with male children will often observe this day by flying carp streamers outside their homes, displaying warrior dolls inside, and eating such traditional delicacies as *chimaki* (sweet rice dumplings wrapped in bamboo leaves) and *kashiwa-machi* (sweet rice cakes filled with sweet bean paste and wrapped in oak leaves). In this episode, Ochibi and Nazeni have taken it upon themselves to make *kashiwa-machi*, and then wrap themselves up inside of the rice cakes as if they were the sweet bean paste that fills these yummy treats.

Two leaves that fit together like a puzzle.
Ochibi found them after the rain.
1
I'll give one to Nazeni.
Ochibi-san!!
2
I was just looking for you. Look at this.
Wow! Those are pretty leaves.
As a token of our friendship ...
3
Oh, this is my good friend Mr. Pankul.
It's nice to meet you, Ochibi-san.
4
He just moved here, so be nice to him.
5
Ochibi gave one leaf to each of them.
One for me, too? Thanks.
Look, it's a perfect fit.
6
Ochibi, not knowing why, found himself feeling a little melancholy.
7

Hello! It's your invited guest Pankui.
1
I didn't invite you.
Oh.
As a token of our friendship, I brought you some freshly baked bread.
Oh ... thank you.
You're welcome.
4
That reminds me, I'm starving.
As a token of our friendship,why don't you offer me some of that bread?
5
6
No shame at all!
Mmmll Yummy!
But I guess forgiving him means we're already friends.
7

I always see these flowers ... I wonder what they are.
1
Pink-head knotweed, an evergreen perennial native to the Himalayas. Says here they were introduced to Japan during the Meiji era.
2
It's amazing what you can learn if you just bother to look it up.
3
Okay, Pankui's here! So let's eat!
How about aratama-tofu? I love aratama-tofu.
4
Says here that aratama-tofu is a soft-boiled egg topped with "Kaminari-tofu."
5
To make thunder tofu, you break up some tofu and fry it in sesame oil.
Mmm, that's good.
Then add grated radish and season with soy sauce.
More, please.
6
I forgot to have some.
I don't even know what it tastes like.
7

※ kaminari = thunder



水無月 【MINAZUKI】

(n) sixth month of the lunar calendar: June

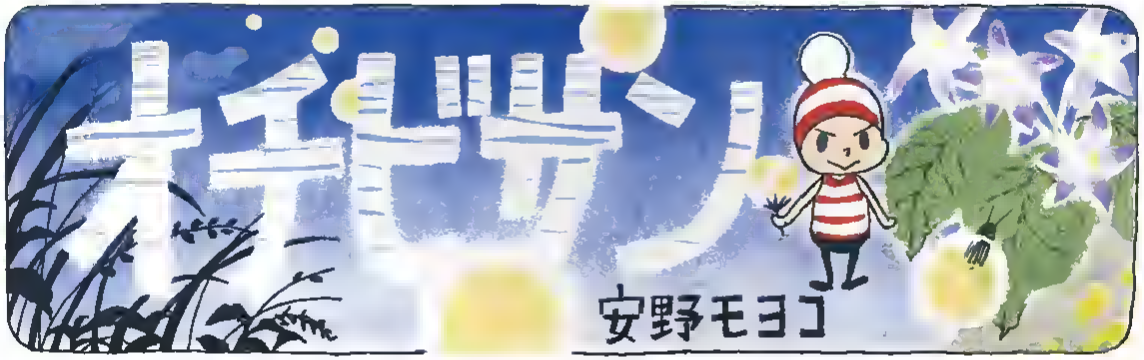
day in the life of Pankui
French bread in bed for breakfast
1
Bread with honey for lunch
2
A cheese roll for an afternoon snack
3
Raisin bread while napping
4
A sweet-bean bun with milk at night while thinking of friends
5

1
Ochibi-san, let's go home. It'll be dark soon.
ピョン
Umm ... just one more time.
2
ギャアアア
The back of this leaf is full of caterpillars!
It's disgusting, but I keep wanting to look.
I don't understand why you enjoy that.
ハア
ハア
Just one more look.
3
ギャアアア
Before long, darkness fell.
4
I heard there are ghosts around here.
That's why I said we should go home.
ギャアアア
I think Ochibi-san just likes getting scared.
6

A family enjoying an outing together.
1
Humph!
Who cares! I can have fun all by myself.
Hey, a ball!
2
When he thinks he's got it, he kicks it away ...
3
Wait a minute!
4
Oops!
5
When he's close enough to grab it, away it goes again ...
This could take all day.
6
I think we were made for each other.
You're one of the family now.
7

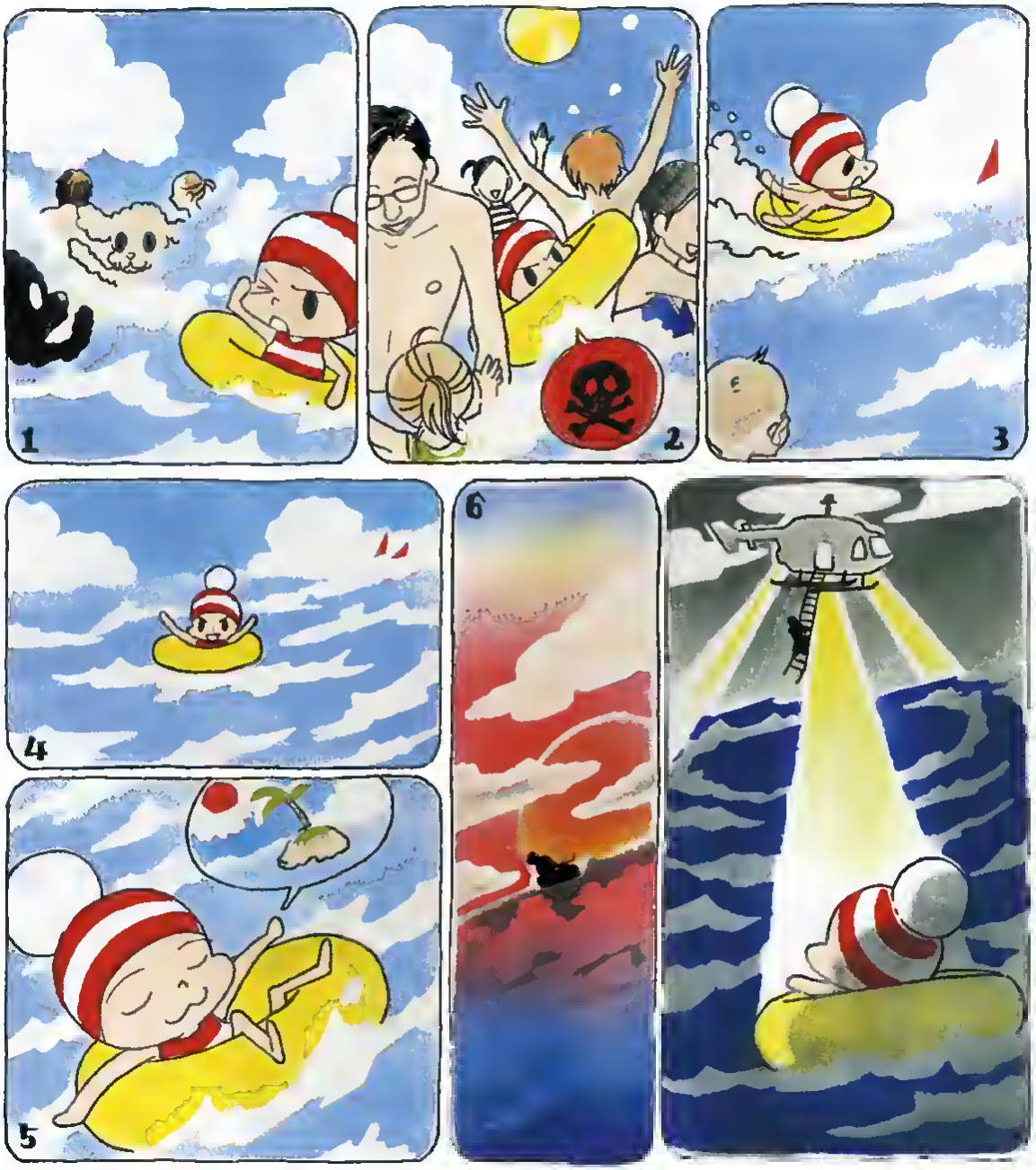
1
Ochibi-san, I have a special breadbox where I can keep your bread for you.
Thanks but no thanks. This is for dinner tonight.
If I put it in my breadbox, it'll get bigger and taste better.
3
You can enjoy all the extra bread later.
Really?
Everyone does it.
Well ... In that case, here.
Two weeks later.
Hello!
ゴンゴン
Has my bread grown bigger?
4
Your bread? It was delicious!
5
Nazeni ...
6
Giving bread to Pankui is like trusting the government with your money.
So I should've eaten it when I had the chance?
7

Welcome!
パタ
1
Oops. I closed it without thinking.
2
You forgot that I was standing behind you, right?
パタ
Sorry about that.
3
Uh oh. Did I just shut the door?
...
You forget that Pankui was right behind you.
4
I think he's waiting for you to open the door for him.
5



文月【FUZUKI】

(n) seventh month of the lunar calendar: July


1
2
3
4
5
6

Pure heaven! Even with this old air conditioner.
Ahhh ... so nice and cool.
I'm freezing. I'll take a bath to warm up.
2
Yikes! Who put ice in here!?
Want another blanket?
Is it summer now or winter?
A hot-water bottle might help.
4

See? After planting the morning glory seeds, I follow their progress in this journal.
July 1
2 blossoms
1 flower bud
July 2
3 blossoms
1
It's fun to watch how the vines grow and grow.
Flower Journal
2007
Morning glories
Every day I find something new. It's fascinating.
2
I wanna make a journal, too!
Me, too!
NOTE
3
Hmm, this vine goes here ...
How about this one?
4
Huh? This is pretty complicated.
It comes around here.
5
6
Watching you two may be more fun than looking at the flowers.
Like this!

Summer is the time for naps on tatami mats.
With a cool breeze and the sound of the wind chime.
1
Hey, I found the perfect place for a summer nap!
2
3
Standing room only!?
Well, it is the season.
Could you slide over a little?

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

Tatami mats are commonly used as a flooring material in traditional Japanese-style rooms. With a surface made of woven rush straw that is cool to the touch, tatami-mat rooms are the ideal place to enjoy a noontime nap on hot summer days.

葉月【HAZUKI】

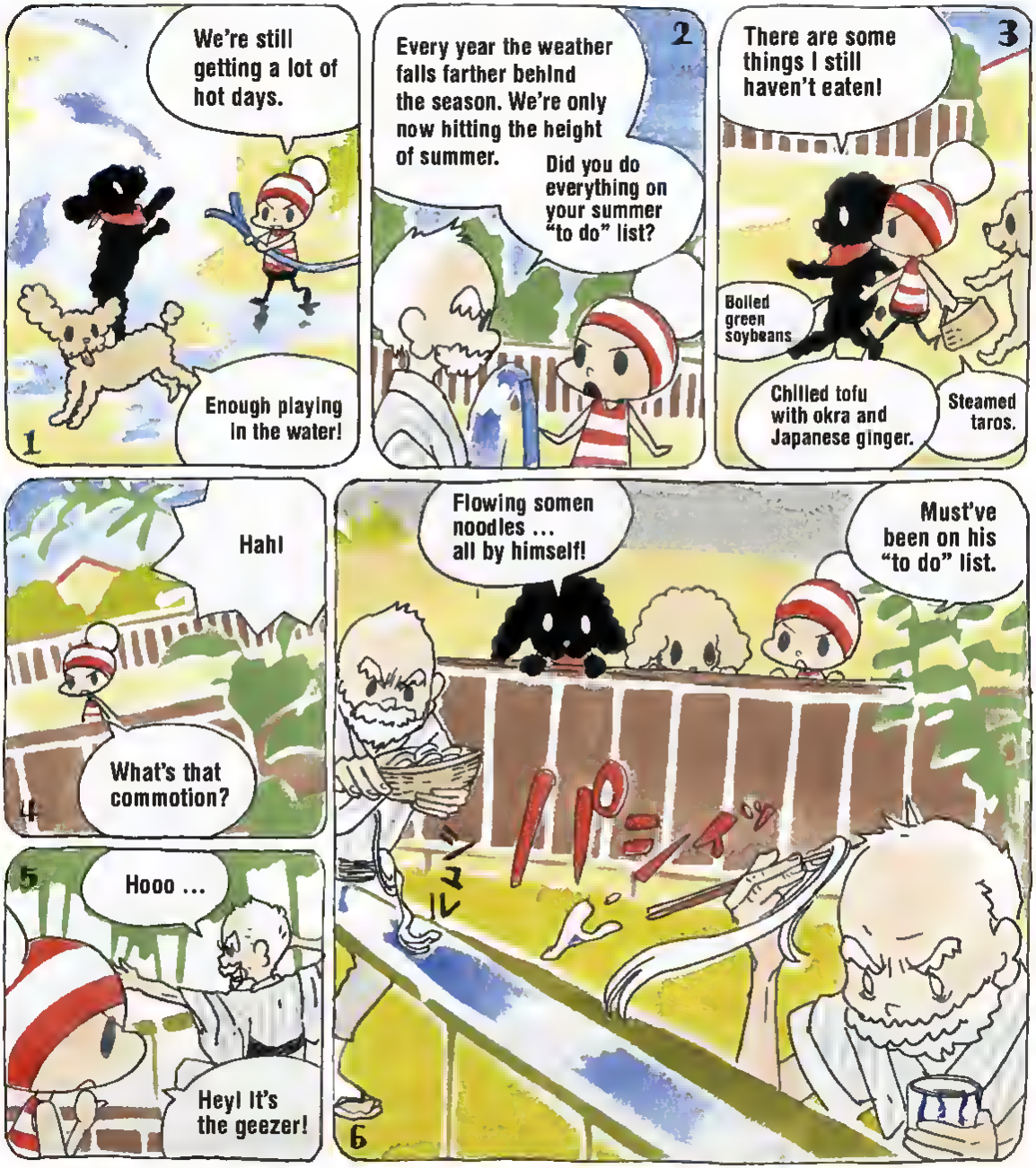
(n) eighth month of the lunar calendar: August

カッ
it's hot! Time to sprinkle water.
With the front finished ...
it's time to do the street.
2
ドン
Humph!
The water-sprinkling rivals exchange glares!!
5
!!
ジャー
8
Starting tomorrow, this is my territory!
So be it!
It's sopping wet out here!

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

Ladling or sprinkling water in front gardens and on streets is a common traditional custom in Japan during the hot summer months. The water prevents dust from rising and also helps to cool the surrounding area. It should be noted, however, that unlike the contest that played out between Ochibi and his water-sprinkling rival in this episode, the water should be scattered in moderation.

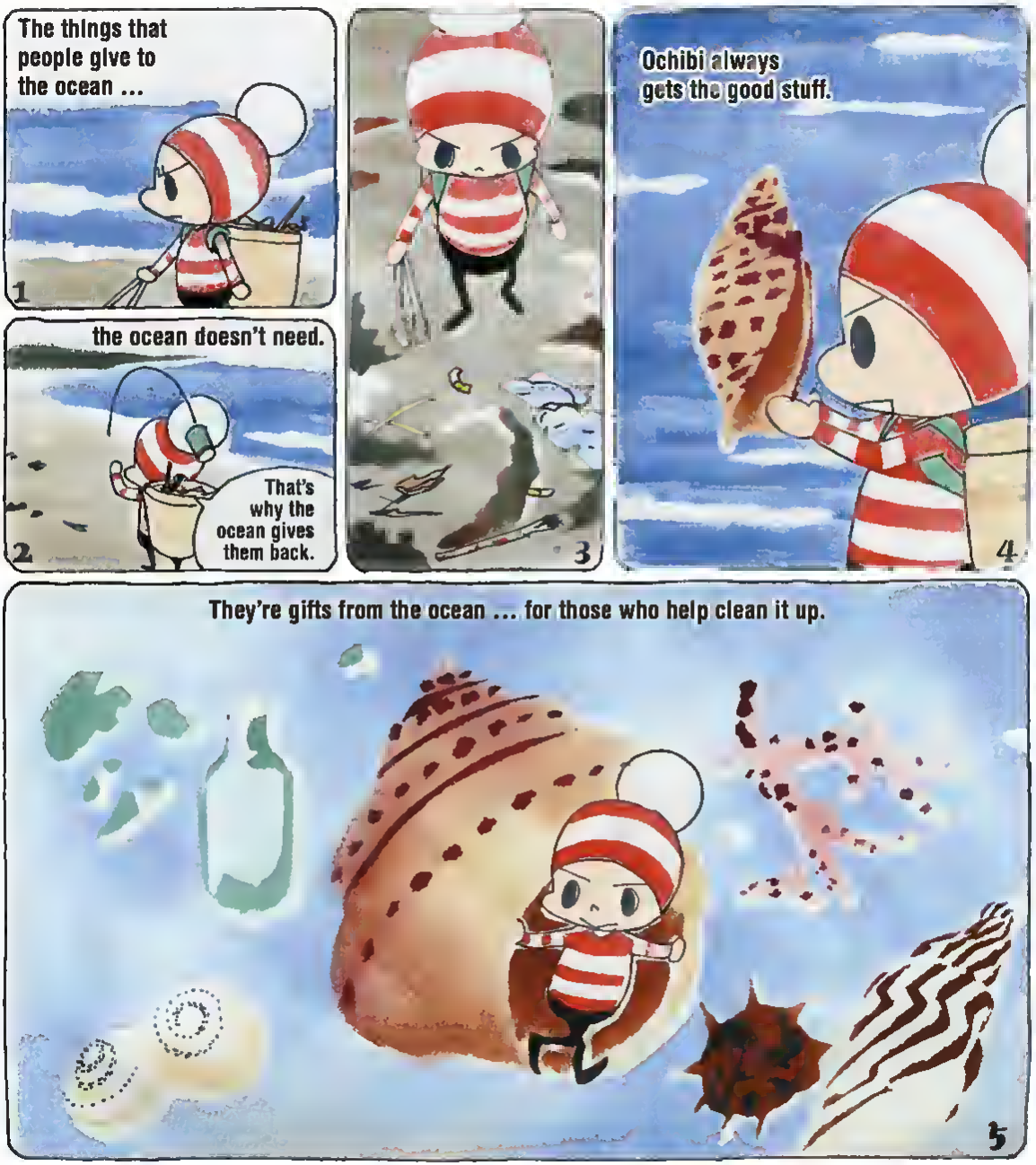
Sparklers
Shaved ice
Bats
Lightning
Summer ...
I even like the lonely
feeling I get as
it fades away.


We're still getting a lot of hot days.
Enough playing in the water!
1
Every year the weather falls farther behind the season. We're only now hitting the height of summer.
Did you do everything on your summer "to do" list?
2
There are some things I still haven't eaten!
Boiled green soybeans
Chilled tofu with okra and Japanese ginger.
Steamed taros.
3
Hah!
What's that commotion?
4
Flowing somen noodles ... all by himself!
Must've been on his "to do" list.
5
Hooo ...
Hey! It's the geezer!
6

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

Somen, a popular summertime meal, are thin Japanese noodles made from wheat flour and typically served cold with a light dipping broth. One fun way to enjoy somen is as "flowing noodles," in which diners get to test their chopstick-using skills by plucking the noodles out of a stream of cold water that travels down a long bamboo flume. Unlike the geezer in this episode, however, the person who places the noodles in the flowing stream of water is usually not one of the diners!

Ochibi-san, where are you going?
I don't know!
1
What does he mean he doesn't know?
When Ochibi-san sees a train, he has to chase after it.
3
Unh ...
Unh ...
4
And away it goes ...
5

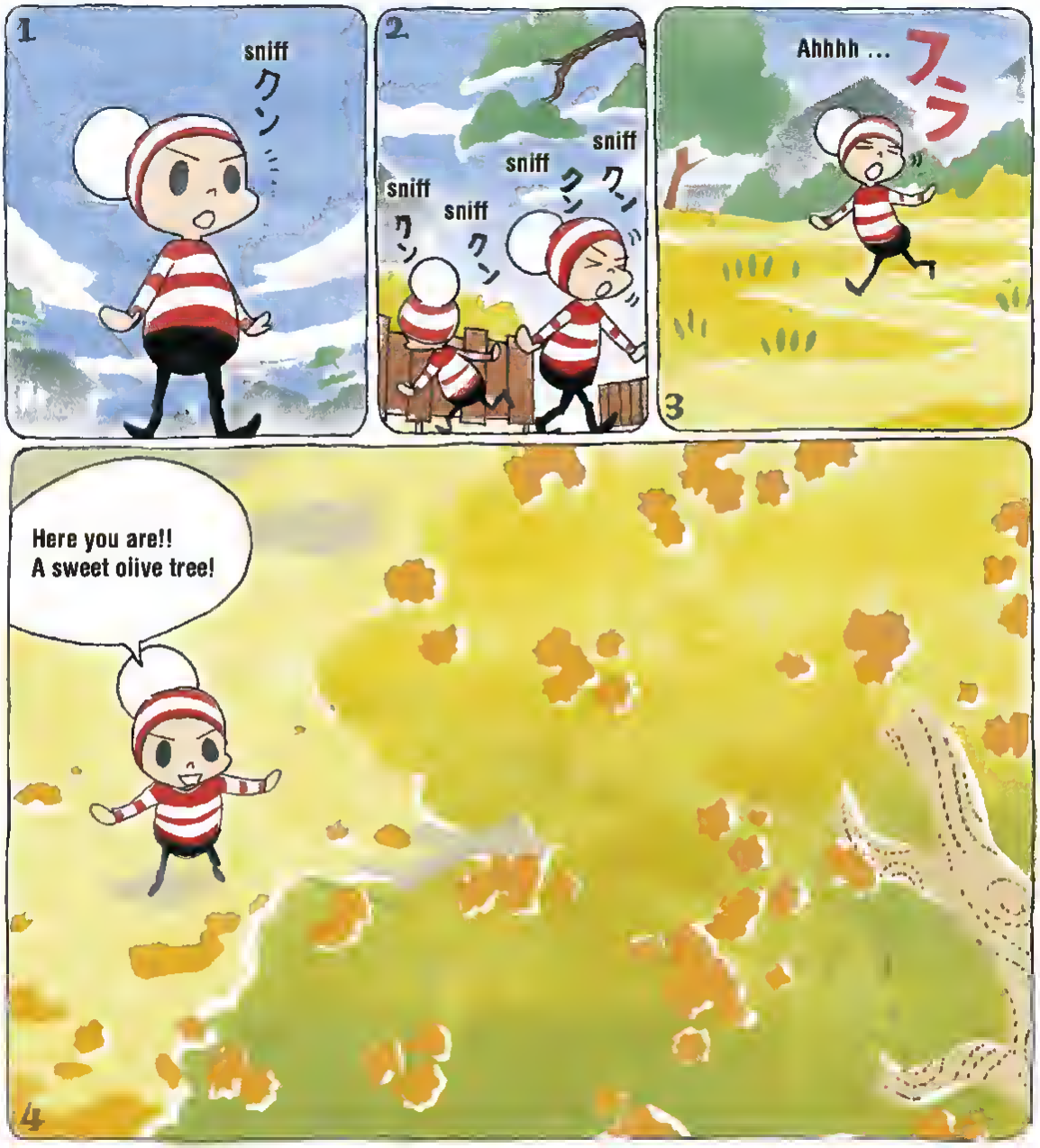

The things that people give to the ocean ...
1
the ocean doesn't need.
That's why the ocean gives them back.
2
3
Ochibi always gets the good stuff.
4
They're gifts from the ocean ... for those who help clean it up.
5

長月 【NAGATSUKI】

(n) ninth month of the lunar calendar: September

You should at least try it. You might even like it.
There's no way I'll try it.
1
Moving your hips so the hoop doesn't drop ... how pointless!
カポ
2
3
Weee!
Hey, he's good!
4
Weee!
Weee!
Should we tell him that it won't be the end of the world if the hoop drops?

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to "The Ochibi Show"!
オチビショー
Dual roles
1
Yay!
スタッ
2
And the first song of the show is ... "Playing in the Sand."
Ochibi's up to something over there.
Yay! Yay!
3
I built a mountain out of sand ...
Dug a tunnel but it fell ...
4
Huh!?
5
Umm ... you're embarrassing me, so ...
Please leave.


1
sniff
クン
2
sniff
クン
sniff
クン
sniff
クン
sniff
クン
3
Ahhhh ...
フラ
4
Here you are!!
A sweet olive tree!

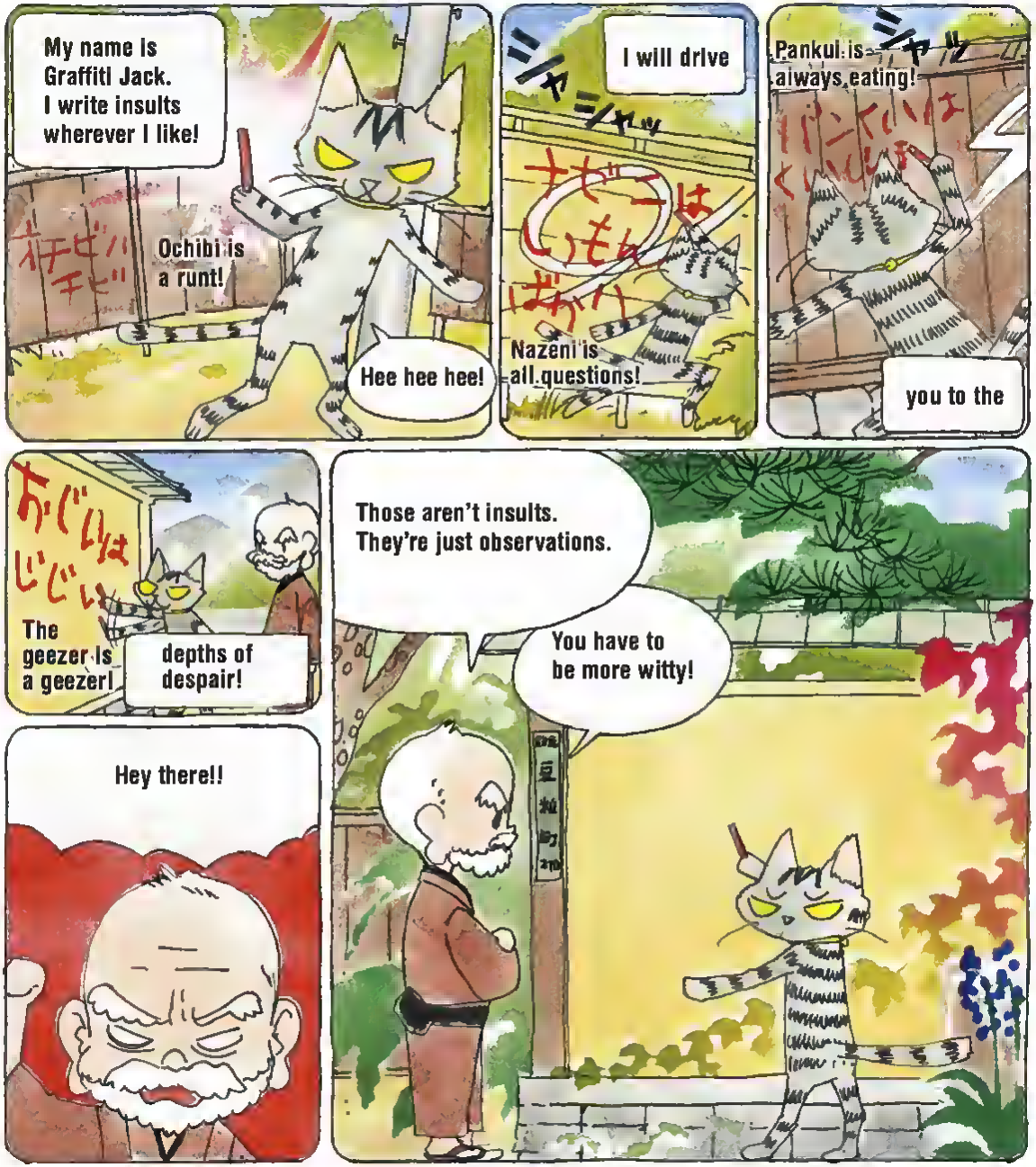
A crow gourd vine! I love crow gourds!
It's probably already borne fruit.
1
I'll just climb up and get some.
Be careful.
Unngh.
Unngh.
3
He's pretty high up. Is he okay?
He's okay. They're crow gourds.
4
6
When he's done, he should just fly back like a crow.
I wanna fly, too!
Got 'em!
ぱっ

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

The gourds that have attracted Ochibi's attention in this episode are called crow gourds in Japanese. In English, they are known as snake gourds.

神無月 【KANNAZUKI】

(n) tenth month of the lunar calendar: October


My name is Graffiti Jack. I write insults wherever I like!
Ochibi is a runt!
Hee hee hee!
I will drive
Nazeni is all questions!
Pankui is always eating!
you to the
The geezer is a geezer!
depths of despair!
Those aren't insults. They're just observations.
You have to be more witty!
Hey there!!

Ochibi-san! Want to hunt for grapes tomorrow?
Hunt?
BANG
1
We'll hunt for mushrooms the day after tomorrow.
And next week we can hunt for apples.
Is it hunting season?
If we're going hunting, we'll probably need a gun.
But all I've got is this toy gun.
3
Gotta practice.
4
I'm hunting autumn leaves.
5
6

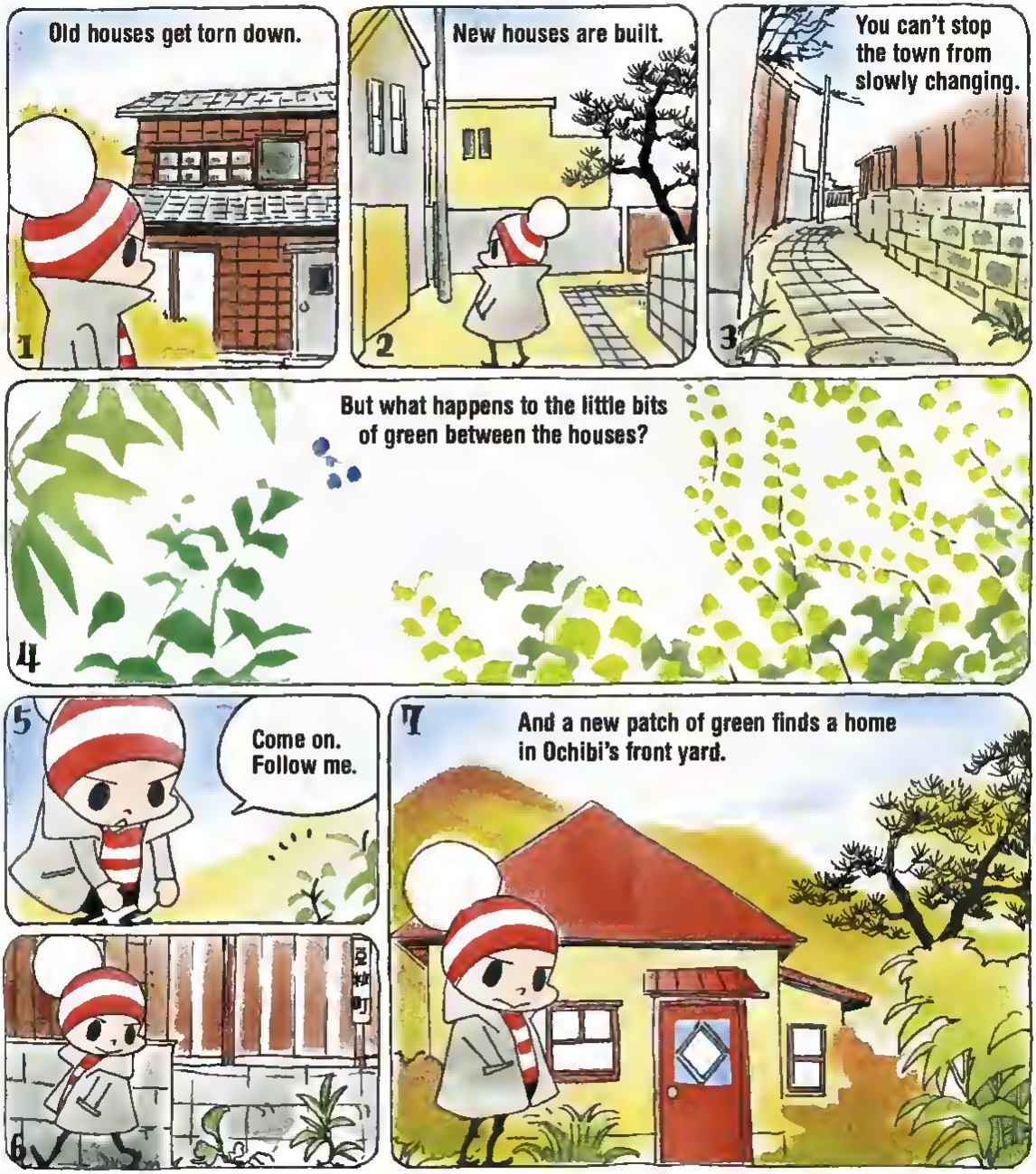
The day after a walk in the forest ...
1
2
ガブッ
Chomp!
3
Mushrooms have grown on his head.
4
We'll call them Ochibi mushrooms.
No, don't!!
5
When he tries not to get angry, they get even bigger.
We can make a stew, so get angrier.
Who's ... getting ... angry!?
7
Further research showed that when Ochibi grows angry, the mushrooms increase.
Research by Nazeni
6

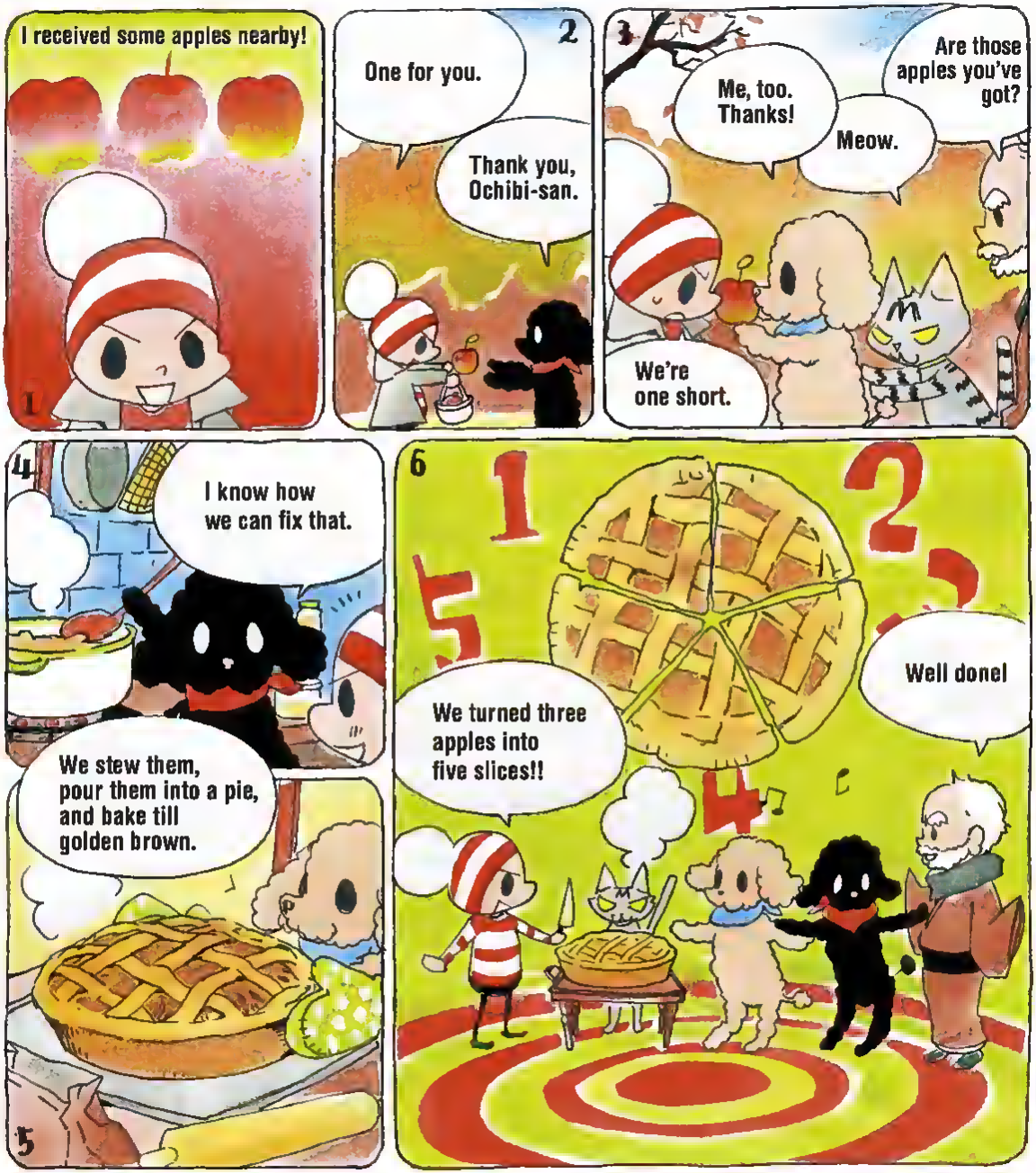
Hey, an acorn!
1
Acorn is the common name given to the nut of an oak tree.
Sawtooth oak acorns have jagged caps.
Japanese evergreen oak acorns are round.
2
They all look like they're wearing caps that perfectly match their heads.
3
Caps...
4
So ... is Ochibi-san's head also ...
5
A great big bump?
Braided hair gathered on top? He's a girl!?
Actually, it's filled with acorns!
7

霜月【SHIMOTSUKI】

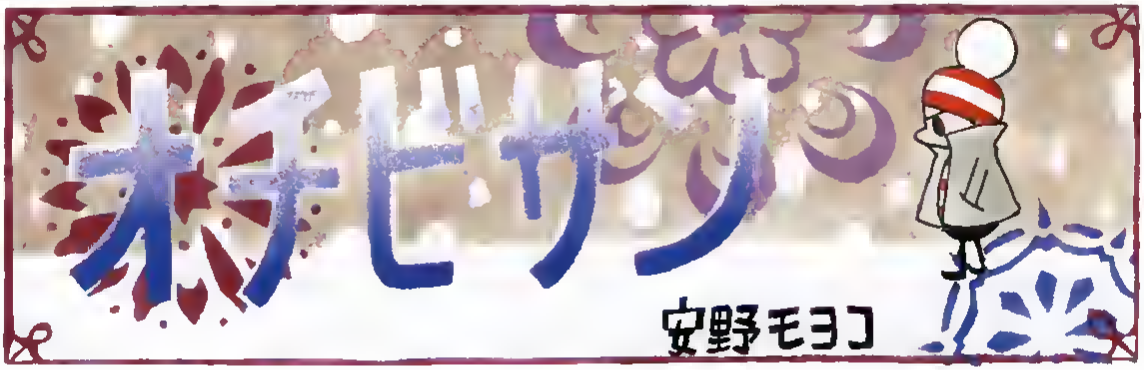
(n) eleventh month of the lunar calendar: November

タタタ
1
2
3
So, Ochibi-san, how's it looking this year?
Nope, not yet.
4
Tomorrow ... maybe.
5
Ochibi-san is Little Pea Town's official appraiser of autumn leaves.
タタタ
6
Hmm ... crisp response, light crunch ... perfect!
ワシャワシャ
7
Everyone came running to stamp on the autumn leaves.


Old houses get torn down.
1
New houses are built.
2
You can't stop the town from slowly changing.
3
But what happens to the little bits of green between the houses?
4
5
Come on. Follow me.
6
7
And a new patch of green finds a home in Ochibi's front yard.


I received some apples nearby!
1
One for you.
Thank you, Ochibi-san.
2
Are those apples you've got?
Me, too. Thanks!
Meow.
We're one short.
3
I know how we can fix that.
4
We stew them, pour them into a pie, and bake till golden brown.
5
We turned three apples into five slices!!
Well done!
6

I smell a campfire.
クン
クン
1
Roasted sweet potatoes.
クンクン
2
3
Nazeni, your head smells like the sun.
クン
クン
Ochibi-san, yours smells like onions ...
4
クン
クン
and carrots ... and meat ... and potatoes!?
5
They're having curry tonight.
6



師走【SHIWASU】

(n) twelfth month of the lunar calendar: December

When it's cold, we can warm up with a game of hip-huddle!
Hip! Hip! Huddle! Huddle!
Everybody puuush!
Hip! Hip! Huddle! Huddle!
ドドド
Everybody... Aaah, I can't stop!!
Oh no! A pond!!
ボチャン!
4
Hey, it's nice and warm!
モゥー
Since when was this a hot spring?
No ... the water's cold.
We're the ones who are warm.

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

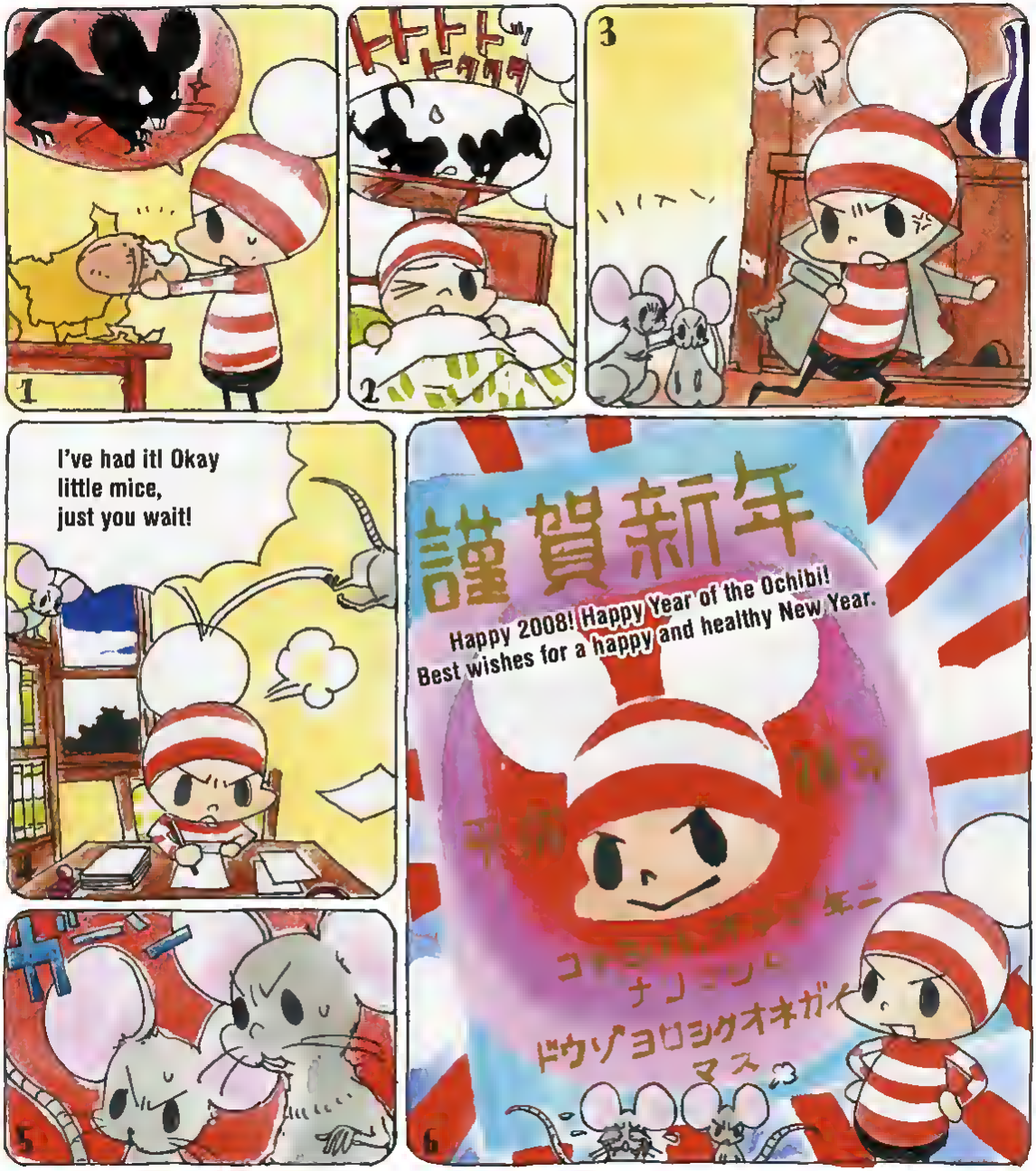
On cold days in Japan, a simple game called Oshikura Manju provides children with an easy way to warm up. To play, the kids huddle together in a circle with their backs to the center, and then forcefully push back against each other while chanting "Oshikura Manju, don't you cry when you get pushed!" While the game has no clear ending and doesn't result in winners or losers, a few rounds of Oshikura Manju usually has the desired effect and the players soon find themselves feeling considerably warmer.

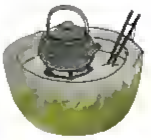
1
2
Time to get home!!
It's dark already.
3
Have to make the rice, broil some fish ...
4
Huh!? It's only 4:30?
5
It's really cold.
6

Today we clean up the house!
Roger!!
1
We'll start high and work our way down.
2
The windows we wipe with wet newspaper.
3
While we're at it, we'll clean you up, too.
4
And while we're at it, let's clean you, too.
5
We're all warmed up!
6
Ahh, nice and clean!
But aren't we forgetting something?
7

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

In Japan, the end of the year is when many families conduct a thorough top-to-bottom housecleaning, which enables them to welcome the New Year with a clean and tidy home.


1
トトトトッ
2
3
I've had it! Okay little mice, just you wait!
謹賀新年
Happy 2008! Happy Year of the Ochibi!
Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.
5
6

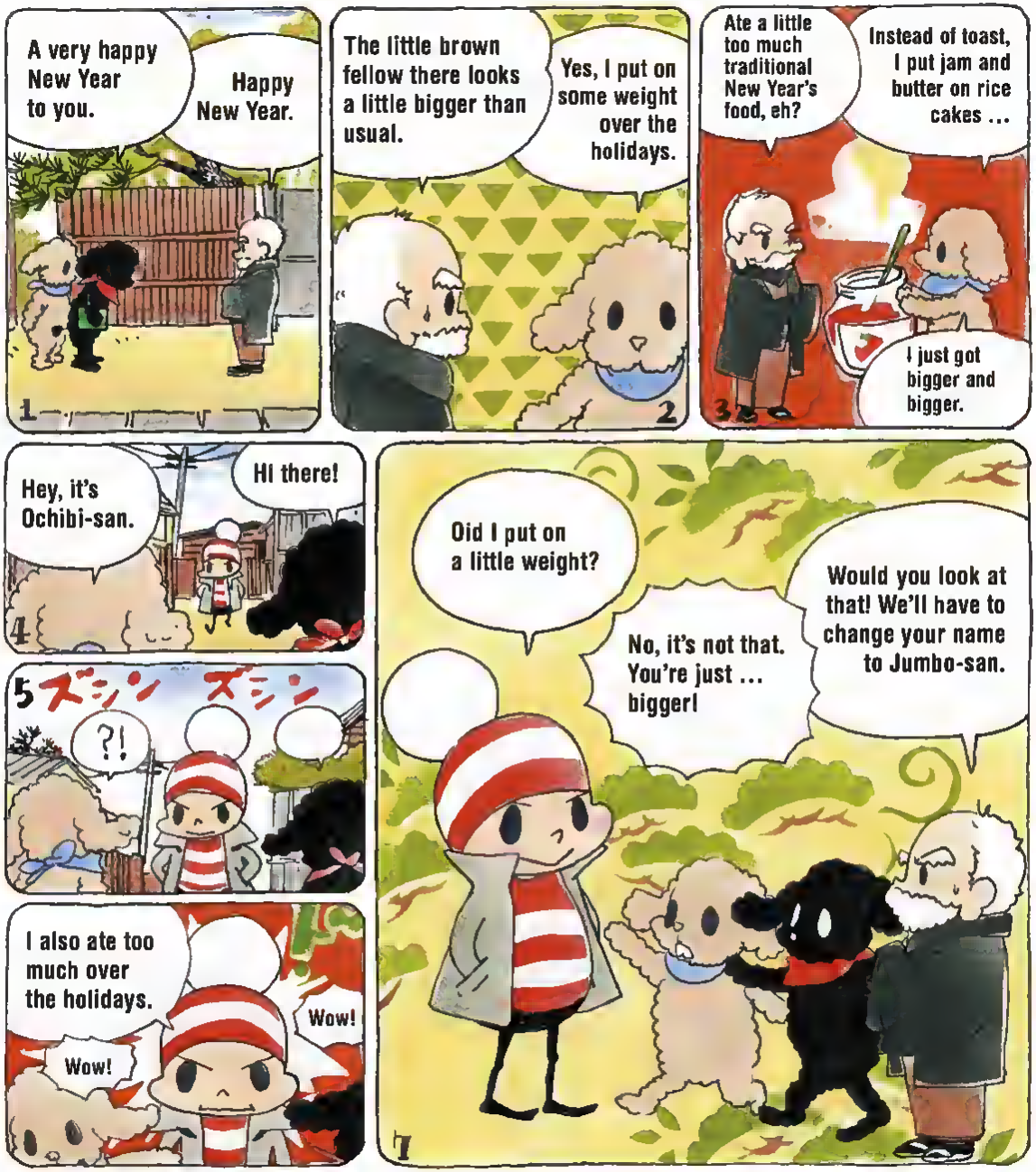


IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

In Japan, as the end of the year draws near, just about everyone is busy writing *nengajo*, or New Year's postcards, which are similar to the Christmas cards and other season's greetings cards sent near the end of the year in many western countries. The New Year's postcards, which are sent to family, friends and acquaintances, are delivered after the start of the new year. The cards commonly feature a customary New Year's greeting, and often include some reference to the corresponding animal from the twelve-year Chinese zodiac cycle. The year 2008, for which Ochibi is preparing his New Year's postcards in this episode, is the Year of the Rat. As an expression of the displeasure he feels towards the rodents who have taken up residence in his home, Ochibi has declared 2008 the "Year of the Ochibi."

睦月【MUTSUKI】

(n) first month of the lunar calendar: January


A very happy New Year to you.
Happy New Year.
1
The little brown fellow there looks a little bigger than usual.
Yes, I put on some weight over the holidays.
2
Ate a little too much traditional New Year's food, eh?
Instead of toast, I put jam and butter on rice cakes ...
I just got bigger and bigger.
3
Hey, it's Ochibi-san.
HI there!
4
5
ズシン ズシン
?!
I also ate too much over the holidays.
Wow!
Wow!
Oid I put on a little weight?
No, it's not that. You're just ... bigger!
Would you look at that! We'll have to change your name to Jumbo-san.
7

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

Japanese New Year holidays are often celebrated by spending time with family and paying visits to a shrine or temple. The start of the new year is also the time to partake in a variety of traditional, and tasty, New Year's dishes, in which rice cakes frequently play a central role. As such, by the time the holidays come to an end, it is not uncommon for some Japanese people to discover that they have put on a few extra pounds.

キコ
Are the plum blossoms now in bloom? Have the cherry blossoms still yet to?
キコ
1
2
How elegant ... someone's hung a tanzaku poem.
3
"With the arrival of spring Have the plum blossoms bloomed? I can't wait for the plum wine."
Huh!?
"Would the fruit hurry up and come? I can't wait for the pickled plums."
4
I had a feeling that was your doing.
I've already got dibs on this tree's fruit!
Don't worry, I won't take any.
5
I'm sorry about what he said, plum trees.
You look great just the way you are.
Truly splendid!
6

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

Tanzaku are small strips of paper on which are written a poem or personal wish. In this episode, Pankui has decided to use *tanzaku* to lay claim to the fruit of the plum trees to satisfy his insatiable desire to enjoy delicious food and drink.

When it snows, Ochib gets to work.
1
2
3
Is it ... a snowman?
4
No, it's not.
5
It's Ochibi's father ...
who works as a plasterer in a far-away town.
6

如月【KISARAGI】

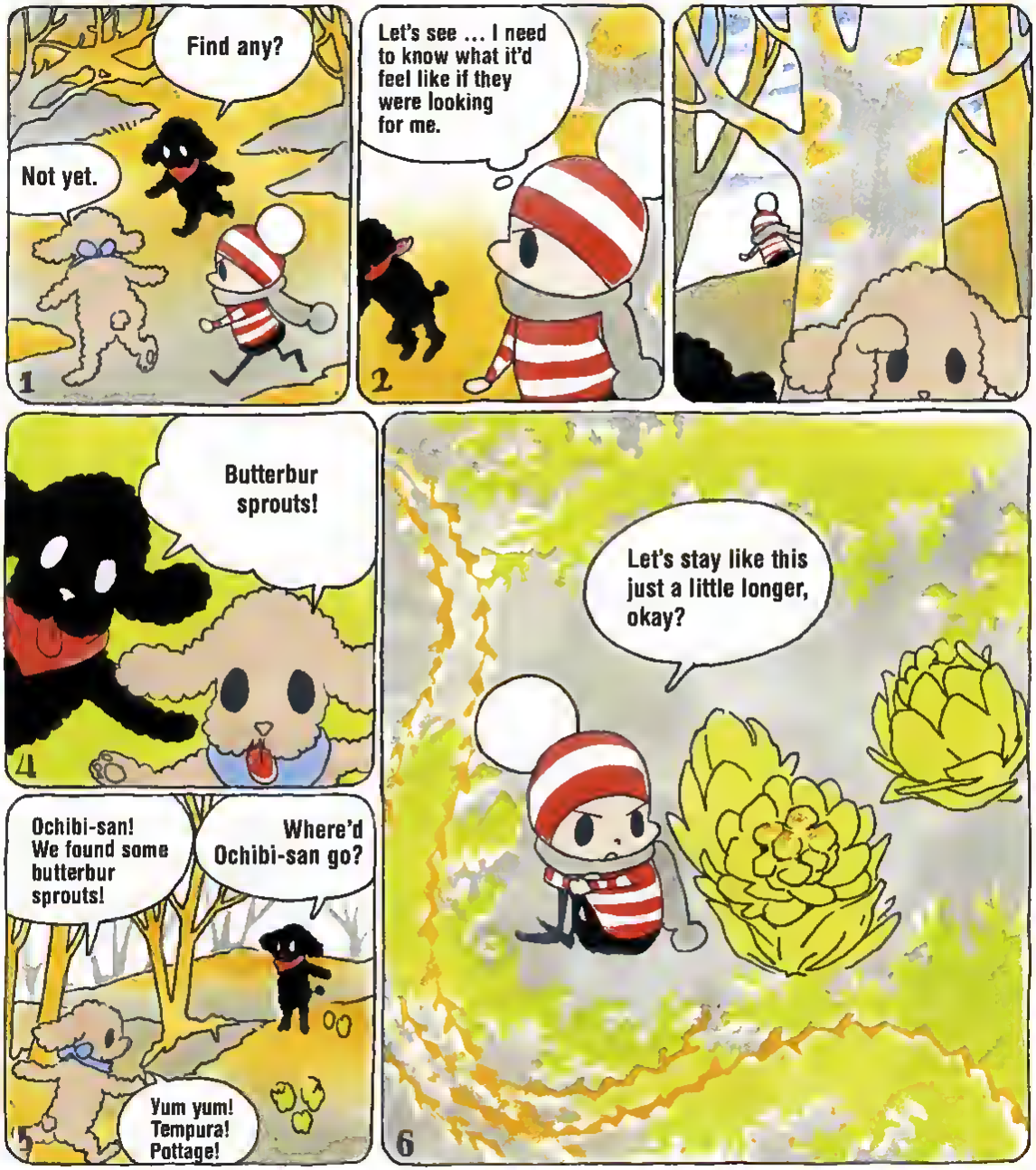
(n) second month of the lunar calendar: February

It says demons don't like holly. It scratches their eyes.
1
Putting out sardine heads serves as a warning to demons.
All that's left is throwing the beans.
They're already roasted.
3
That's strange. Why are these beans all over the ...
He wouldn't!!
4
Pankui! Where are all the beans?
I already threw them. I ate them, too.
モリ モリ
I ate the ones for you, too.
5
Pankui out!!
Woof!
It's no good. The bread crumbs are just making him happy.
6

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

In Japan, February 3 or 4 marks the day before the start of spring according to the Japanese lunar calendar. It is a day in which Japanese families carry out rituals to keep away bad luck in preparation for the arrival of the lunar New Year. The rituals, which can vary depending on region, often include throwing roasted soybeans — out the door or at a family member playing the role of a demon — to drive out evil spirits. The beans are thrown while shouting "Demons out! Good fortune in!" Afterward, it's customary to eat the same number of beans as one's age.

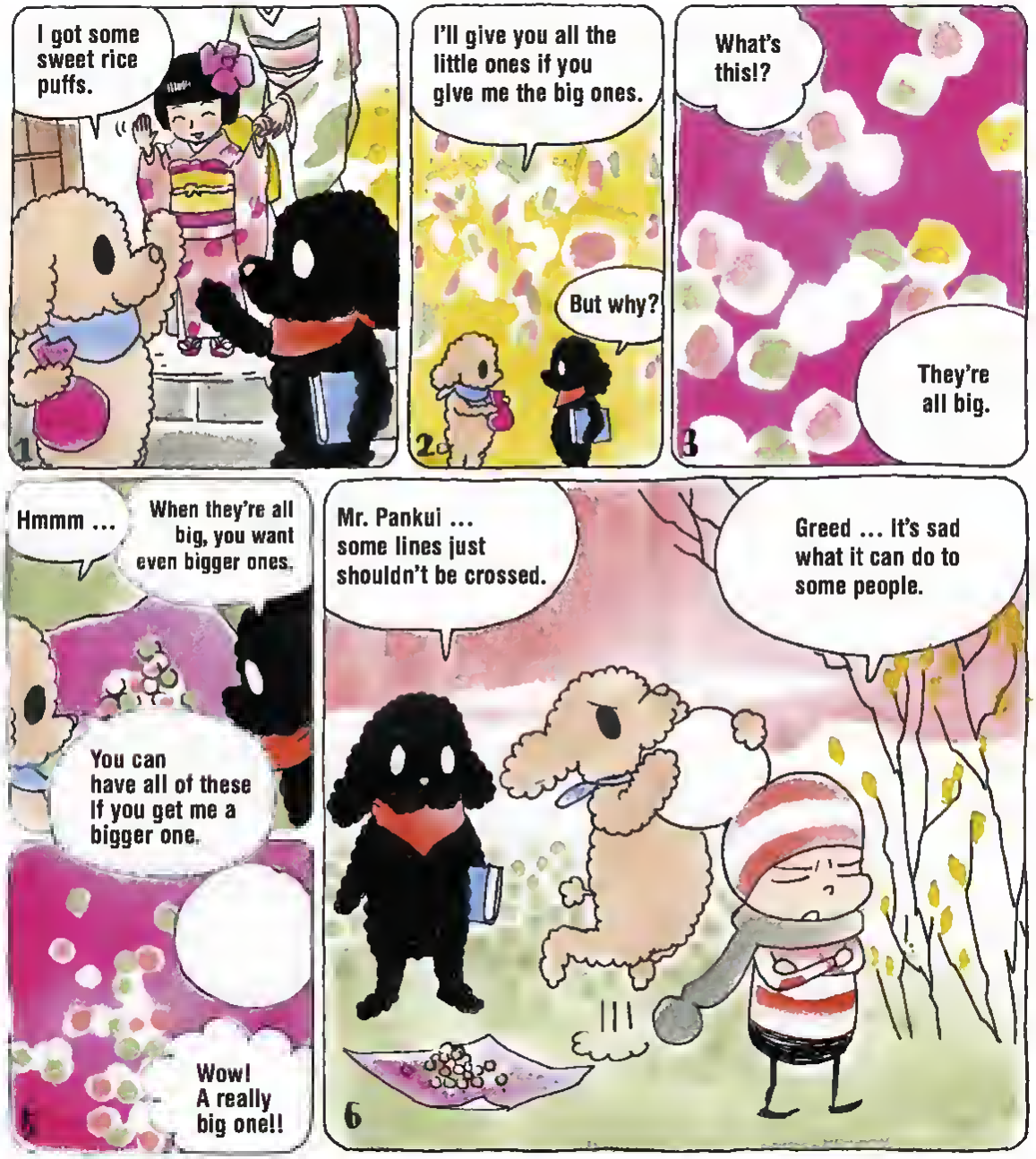
Although he's sick, Nazeni wants no visitors.
I don't want to give them my cold.
1
2
But, what if ...
no one knows that I have a cold?
3
I want a slice of mandarin orange.
4
5
I may die here, without being able to move.
6
You in bed like that with the shutters open ... how could I not come and visit!?
7


Find any?
Not yet.
1
Let's see ... I need to know what it'd feel like if they were looking for me.
2
Butterbur sprouts!
4
Ochibi-san! We found some butterbur sprouts!
Where'd Ochibi-san go?
Yum yum! Tempura! Pottage!
5
Let's stay like this just a little longer, okay?
6

1
The daffodils have bloomed.
The Japanese nightingale sings its merry song.
2
Sitting in the sun like this feels just like spring.
Even so, could you slide over a little?
3
It gets cold as soon as the sun passes.
But I can't slide over any more.
4
Meow!!
(It's so warm up here!)
It we stand like this, we can both get some sun.
Maybe, but it won't last much longer ...
5
Arrgh!
We're out of sun!!

弥生【YAYOI】

(n) third month of the lunar calendar: March


I got some sweet rice puffs.
1
I'll give you all the little ones if you give me the big ones.
But why?
2
What's this!?
They're all big.
3
Hmmm ...
When they're all big, you want even bigger ones.
You can have all of these if you get me a bigger one.
Wow! A really big one!!
5
Mr. Pankui ... some lines just shouldn't be crossed.
Greed ... It's sad what it can do to some people.
6

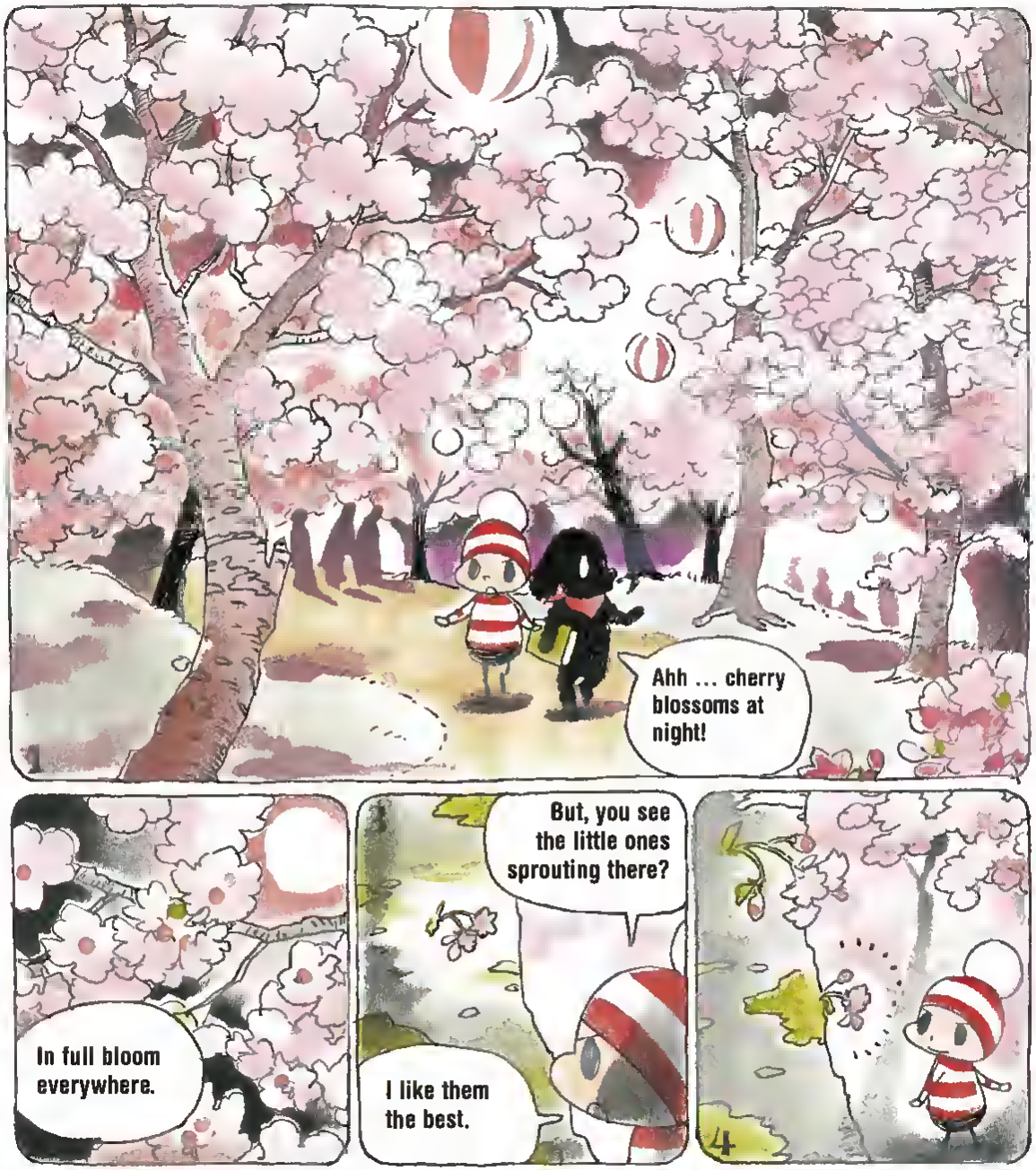
IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING ...

March 3, the third day of the third month of the year, marks Doll Festival, a festival for girls. To celebrate the festival, families with young daughters will set up a special doll platform with figures representing the emperor, empress, attendants and musicians wearing ancient court attire. Colored sweet rice puffs, which someone has given to Pankui in this episode, are a popular treat eaten on the occasion.

ビ～ム Honk!
The geezer is a master nose-blower.
Yes, well ...
1
ぶえっくしょん
Ahhh... choo!!
2
The pollen is awful this time of the year.
3
くしゅ
くしゅ
Pollen?
So, the geezer's got a problem with pollen? He he.
4
I think I'll have some fun.
A little here ...
5
And some more pollen over here ...
6
A glowing golden cat!!
Is it a new breed?
If only my nose would stop running!
7

A horsetail!
1
Violets!
2
Tha air smells delightful...
It's spring!
3
You don't need this muffler any more!
4
A snake!!
Is that a joke?
Well ... I guess it looks a little like a snake.
5
It's not just the plants that wake up when spring arrives.
How do you do?
6

The no-name snake that lives in a rock hole
This year I woke up a little earlier than usual.
1
My goal this year is to make lots of friends and become a much-loved snake.
I won't let anyone think of me as a "snake in the grass."
2
Well, hello there!
3
4
Hmm ... that didn't go according to plan.
5
Am I despised because I'm a snake?
Or because I'm me? Thus begins another year of torment.
It was this big!! At least two meters long!
Sounds tasty!
It was big enough to swallow Nazeni and me in one gulp!


Ahh ... cherry blossoms at night!
In full bloom everywhere.
But, you see the little ones sprouting there?
I like them the best.
4

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